

Made in Persecution

Part three of the series, "Made for Greatness: After God's Heart"

Sunday, October 16, 2022 | Moku Kukonu

God's favor upon our lives can often stir up jealousy, hatred and mistreatment from others.

"As they were coming home, when David returned from striking down the Philistine, the women came out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet King Saul, with tambourines, with songs of joy, and with musical instruments. ⁷And the women sang to one another as they celebrated, 'Saul has struck down his thousands, and David his ten thousands.' ⁸And Saul was very angry, and this saying displeased him. He said, 'They have ascribed to David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed thousands, and what more can he have but the kingdom?' ⁹And Saul eyed David from that day on. ¹⁰The next day a harmful spirit from God rushed upon Saul, and he raved within his house while David was playing the lyre, as he did day by day. Saul had his spear in his hand. ¹¹And Saul hurled the spear, for he thought, 'I will pin David to the wall.' But David evaded him twice. ¹²Saul was afraid of David because the Lord was with him but had departed from Saul. ¹³So Saul removed him from his presence and made him a commander of a thousand. And he went out and came in before the people. ¹⁴And David had success in all his undertakings, for the Lord was with him. ¹⁵And when Saul saw that he had great success, he stood in fearful awe of him. ¹⁶But all Israel and Judah loved David, for he went out and came in before them." (1 Samuel 18:6-16 ESV)

As we choose to honor and trust God, we can conquer persecution by not revenging toward those who mistreat us.

"He said to his men, 'The Lord forbid that I should do this thing to my lord, the Lord's anointed, to put out my hand against him, seeing he is the Lord's anointed.' ⁷So David persuaded his men with these words and did not permit them to attack Saul. And Saul rose up and left the cave and went on his way. ⁸Afterward David also arose and went out of the cave, and called after Saul, 'My lord the king!' And when Saul looked behind him, David bowed with his face to the earth and paid homage. ⁹And David said to Saul, 'Why do you listen to the words of men who say, "Behold, David seeks your harm"? ¹⁰Behold, this day your eyes have seen how the Lord gave you today into my hand in the cave. And some told me to kill you, but I spared you. I said, "I will not put out my hand against my lord, for he is the Lord's anointed."'" (1 Samuel 24:6-10 ESV)

"May the Lord judge between me and you, may the Lord avenge me against you, but my hand shall not be against you." (1 Samuel 24:12 ESV)

"May the Lord therefore be judge and give sentence between me and you, and see to it and plead my cause and deliver me from your hand." (1 Samuel 24:15 ESV)

We can endure being mistreated in our lives with forgiveness because of the example that Christ showed us.

"Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, ¹³bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. ¹⁴And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony." (Colossians 3:12-14 ESV)

"Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ¹¹Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹²Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you." (Matthew 5:10-12 ESV)